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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 NDJAMENA 000043

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SUBJECT: CHAD AND THE UN CONTENT OVER MINURCAT EXTENSION:
THE STATE OF PLAY, JAN 25.

REF: NDJAMENA EMAILS TO AF AND AF/C JAN 5-25

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Classified By: AMB LOUIS J. NIGRO, JR. FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

SUMMARY AND
COMMENT

11. (C) The GOC and the UN have been sparring over the issue of the extension of MINURCAT's mandate since Jan 5. The GOC delivered Jan 15 a note verbale to the UN Secretariat informing it of Chad's "request for the withdrawal from Chad of the PKO" and requesting further "to discuss as soon as possible the modalities of such a withdrawal in conformity with UNSCR 861." The SRSG and Perm Five COMs here have demarched the GOC in the aim of permitting MINURCAT to continue its work under 1861 until the "natural" end of its mandate in 2011. A UN delegation arrives here Jan 26 to discuss the issue with GOC interlocutors, a heavily military and relatively hard-line group. SRSG Angelo told Ambassador Jan 25 that he remained "optimistic" that the GOC and the UN would find a way for MINURCAT to remain on the job through March 2011, including by making concessions based on Chad's "legitimate grievances" regarding MINURCAT's performance on the ground up to now. SRSG has arranged for UN delegation to brief Perm Five COMs here Jan 28.

12. (C) We believe that the GOC's motivations for raising the question of MINURCAT withdrawal Qpond to both domestic and geo-political considerations, including the recently signed peace accords with Sudan, which we will analyze in Septel. We share SRSG's optimism to the extent that the GOC has good reason to reach a compromise solution to this issue that will permit Chad to enjoy the benefits of MINURCAT's presence and activities here, even as it exacts further concessions from the UN in return. But the UN delegation will have be very skillful in its approach to the GOC in order to succeed. The controverQ over what has become known as "MINURCAT withdrawal" has had an impact on humanitarian IOs and NGOs, which we dQuss in aQher septel. END SUMMARY AND COMMENT.

THE BACKSTORY

13. (C) The question of the GOC's stance on extension of MINURCAT's mandate past 15 March 2010 emerged when FORMIN Faki convoked SRSG Angelo January 5 to inform him that the GOC did not intend to agree to an extension of the PKO's mandate under UNSCR 1861, adducing various reasons -- including MINURCAT's lack of troop strength, its ineffectiveness in providing security in Eastern Chad, its relative neglect of the Chad police and gendarme component (the DIS), its supposed lack of respect for Chadian sovereignty, and lack of follow-through regarding promised infrastructure, etc. At the SRG's request, the UNSC Perm Five missions here (including us) demarched the GOC at the COM level in support of a continuation of MINURCAT's presence under its current mandate until 15 March 2011, the earliest.

14. (C) The GOC delivered a note verbale Jan 15 to the UNSYG informing the Secretariat of Chad's "request for the withdrawal from Chad of the PKO" and of its willingness "to discuss as soon as possible the modalities of such a withdrawal in conformity with UNSCR 861." This whole issue is complicated by the fact that SRSG Angelo is scheduled to retire on 26 Feb, although he has held out the prospect of staying on for a time past that date. Since the very beginning, SRSG Angelo has been extremely active talking literally to everyone who counts on this issue.

UN DELEGATION HERE

15. (C) A UN delegation under GEN Cammart, who we understand

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is the UNSYG's Military Counselor and trouble-shooter on PKO matters, arrives here Jan 26. The GOC's ad hoc commission to deal with the delegation includes the MFA SYG, CONAFIT chief GEN Degache, the President's and FORMIN's military advisors, National Intelligence Service chief GEN Chaibo, and Air Force chief GEN Orozi, with relative hard-liners well-represented.

SRSG'S OPTIMISM

16. (C) Angelo told Ambassador Nigro Jan 25 that he was "optimistic" about the mission's chances of reaching a "mutually acceptable solution" to the extension issue. Angelo said that the framework for discussions would be the GOC note: they would discuss modalities of MINURCAT's withdrawal in conformity with UNSC 1861, "with short-, medium-, and long-term options for such withdrawal, and with long-term option keeping MINURCAT on the ground until the "natural" end of the mandate on 15 March 2011.

17. (C) Angelo said that he believed the GOC was concerned to "save face" but not at the expense of earning a completely "negative image" among its international friends and partners. Angelo said he thought that at least some among the GOC were concerned about the impact on conditions on the ground in Eastern Chad, including security, if MINURCAT were to withdraw precipitously. Angelo said he had tried to impress on his GOC interlocutors that withdrawal of MINURCAT troops would necessitate withdrawal of MINURCAT civilian elements as well, including those supporting the DIS: "They cannot have one without the other." Angelo said that he had noticed an increased awareness among GOC officials involved in the issue that there were "political benefit of MINURCAT's presence" conferred on Chad, including diminishing but still real "dissuasive" effect on Chad rebels in Sudan, and a kind of "persuasive effect" on the Chad rebels that the GOC continued to try to attract peacefully back into Chad.

18. (C) Angelo said that the GOC had indicated that it was

open to discussing all three options in terms of UN "guarantees" on issues of importance to the GOC regarding MINURCAT. Angelo said that he had already made the point that MINURCAT's force strength was growing -- it was up to 65 percent now -- and that he had been making concessions to GOC criticisms regarding infrastructure -- he had turned parts of the Abeche airport over to the GOC in return for assurances of shared use.

MINURCAT IN CAR

¶9. (C) Angelo said that he would be in CAR Jan 25-26 for talks with Pres Bozize, who he considered "on board" with MINURCAT extension, because CAR could not control its NE corner without MINURCAT and because he wanted to keep the UN favorable to CAR on the DDR issue there.

COMMENT

¶10. (C) We believe that the GOC's motivations for raising the question of MINURCAT withdrawal respond to both domestic and geo-political considerations, including the recently signed peace accords with Sudan, which we will analyze septel. We share SRSG's optimism to the extent that the GOC has good reason to reach a compromise solution to this issue that will permit Chad to enjoy the benefits of MINURCAT presence and activities here, even as it exacts further concessions from the UN in return. But the UN delegation will have be very skillful in its approach to the GOC in order to succeed. The controversy over what has become known as "MINURCAT withdrawal" has had an impact on humanitarian IOs and NGOs, which we discuss in another septel. END OF COMMENT.

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¶11. (U) Minimize considered.
NIGRO